

# Letter to the editor: gm foods essay



Letter to the Editor: Genetically Modified Food The future of food is here – and it has come in the form of GMO's – Genetically Modified Organisms. GMO's, refer to plant foods that have undergone a process of DNA manipulation, whereby isolated genes of a known function from one organism are copied and transferred into another to introduce desired characteristics. Though this technology is relatively new, GMO's have already found their way into our supermarkets and established themselves firmly into our diets. And it's a welcome change – people all over the world are enjoying their watermelons and grapes seed-free, their apples, juicy and bright and blemish-free.

But of course, there are always sticks in the mud, who oppose change – but what could anyone possibly have against taking something and making it better? Genetically modified food is improved food – and consumers have been reaping its benefits in greater taste and quality, texture, even size and cost. Genetically modified foods can provide a longer shelf life, and even have enhanced nutritional content. Parents can now give their kids the iron value of a plateful of brussel sprouts, in a couple a slices of genetically modified toast. As consumers, we have the right to choose what we buy and GM foods just add to that variety we have to choose from.

Whether we should or shouldn't eat GMO, there should be the choice that we can. GMO's also provide considerable benefits to produce growers and farmers. By adding genes to plants, they can make them more resilient to weather, pests and disease, cutting the need for pesticides, herbicides and chemicals that harm the environment. They can even make their crops mature faster, saving time and money. Ethical concerns have been raised

about genetically modifying food. Carmen Pace said that we should keep our food ‘ as nature intended’.

The human race is itself growth and evolution. If we were to keep things ‘ the way nature intended’, we’d still be living in caves and huts. The ethical issue is age old and no longer applicable in today’s society. To be against the use of GMO, because it’s unnatural, you’d have to be against hair dye, medicine, and all things man-made.

Another concern is that there could be long term health risks associated to consuming GMO. However, there is no current evidence that suggests GMO’s are harmful to health. We can trust that government health organizations would check and approve that products are safe before going on shelves. Also, as of 2002, Australian laws have regulated that all genetically modified products must be labeled. In fact, GMO offers a range of health benefits by taking away the need for harmful pesticides and chemicals on fruit, and even fortifying food with added nutrients: orange juice with calcium, and even edible vaccines.

As society advances and everything gets bigger and better, so does our food. Through genetic modification, we now have foods that taste better, last longer, are more nutritious, less expensive and even more aesthetically pleasing. Whether we should eat GMO or its natural counterparts, we should be able to express our freedom to choose. Furthermore, we have various regulatory bodies to make sure whatever we choose is safe. Having said that, GMO’s are clearly the superior alternative.

The benefits far outweigh the negatives - what's the harm in that? Let's cut to the chase; Genetically Modified Organisms? It's really Genetically Improved Organisms. The future of food is here, and we should embrace it.